

REMARKS

Claims 1-362 are pending in the present application. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's courtesy during the telephone interview on September 23, 2003. A brief summary of the prosecution history is provided for the Examiner's assistance.

Background

On February 27, 2001, the Examiner issued a multiplicity rejection and required the Applicants to select 50 claims for examination. The Applicants selected with traverse claims 1, 11, 12, 30, 32, 35, 38, 39, 59, 60, 79, 80, 85, 86, 91, 103, 104, 114, 119, 131, 143, 155, 167, 181, 193, 205, 217, 229, 241, 253-255, 267, 279 and 291-306.

The Examiner subsequently issued an office action on December 5, 2001 allowing certain of the selected claims, rejecting other claims and withdrawing the non-selected claims. In a response dated June 5, 2002, Applicants amended certain of the selected claims and canceled 158 claims (including claim 14). The Applicants also amended some of the non-selected claims that either corresponded to the selected claims or depended from the selected claims. The Examiner requested on September 10, 2002 that the amendments to the non-selected claims be withdrawn, which Applicants did on October 10, 2002. (Applicants note that the listed claims in the present Amendment include the June 5 amendments to the selected claims that were not withdrawn.). The Applicants also maintained their traversal of the multiplicity rejection and suggested that the claims of the application may be divided in five groups.

The Examiner withdrew the multiplicity rejection on January 2, 2003 and issued a restriction requirement based on the suggested five groups. The Applicants subsequently elected Group I with claims 1-13, 15-38, 60-79, 119, 131, 292-298, 301, 302, 310, 311, 327-333, 336, 337, 345 and 346 and added new claim 362. The present Office Action addresses these elected claims.



Office Action

The Applicants note with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter with respect to claims 2-10, 13-29, 31-34, 36-38, 61-78, 296, 298, 311, 327-333, 336, 337, 345, 346 and 362. The Examiner rejected claims 1, 11, 12, 30, 292-295 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Application No. 09101786. Claims 60, 79, 301 and 302 were rejected under § 102(e) as being anticipated by Imai et al. (US 6184454). Claims 119 and 131 were rejected under § 102(e) as being anticipated by Armanato et al. (US 6094857). The Examiner rejected claims 1, 39, 60, 292 and 301 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ide (US 5892171). Claims 35 and 297 were rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ide in view of Kim et al. (US 6083009) or, alternatively, in view of JP '786.

Amendment

Applicants seek to place the application in condition for allowance. Applicants have canceled without prejudice all the withdrawn claims from non-elected groups II – V as set forth in the Examiner's restriction requirement dated January 2, 2003.

Claims 1-10, 119, 131, 292, 310, 311, 327, 345 and 346

Applicants have amended claim 1 to incorporate the recitations of claim 8, which has been canceled. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claims 2, 3 and 10 which depend from claim 1. The amendments to claims 2 and 3 are the amendments made on June 5, 2002 and subsequently withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-7, 9, 10, 119 and 131 – which all depend from claim 1 – are in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 292 which is directed to a method to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 8. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 292 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claims 310 and 311 to depend from claim 292. (It appears that claim 310 was inadvertently omitted from the Examiner's list of pending claims, given that it was included in group I of the restriction requirement dated January 2, 2003.) The amendments to claims 310 and 311 are the amendments made on June 5, 2002 and subsequently withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 310 and 311 are in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 327 which is directed to a medium to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 8 and to include the withdrawn amendment made on June 5, 2002. Although claim 327 was indicated as allowed, it appears that this allowance may have been inadvertent in view of the rejections to claims 1 and 292 as discussed during the telephone interview. Applicants have made the present amendment in view of the apparent inadvertent allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner inform the Applicants if the allowance was not inadvertent as discussed. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 327 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claims 345 and 346 which depend from claim 327. The amendments to claims 345 and 346 include the amendments made on June 5, 2002 and subsequently withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 345 and 346 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 11, 293 and 328

Applicants have amended claim 11 to incorporate the recitation of claim 8. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the claim 11 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 293 which is directed to a method to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 8. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 293 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 328 which is directed to a medium to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 8 and to include the withdrawn amendment made on June 5, 2002. Although claim 328 was indicated as allowed, it appears that this allowance may have been inadvertent in view of the rejections to claims 11 and 293. Applicants have made the present amendment in view of the apparent inadvertent allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner inform the Applicants if the allowance was not inadvertent. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 328 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 12, 13, 15-29, 294 and 329

Applicants have amended claim 12 to incorporate the recitations of claim 29, which has been canceled. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the claim 12 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claims 16 and 22 which depend from claim 12. The amendments to claims 16 and 22 are the amendments made on June 5, 2002 and subsequently withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 13 and 15-28 – which all depend from claim 12 – are in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 294 which is directed to a method to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 29. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 294 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 329 which is directed to a medium to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 29 and to include the withdrawn amendment made on June 5, 2002. Although claim 329 was indicated as allowed, it appears that this allowance may have been inadvertent in view of the rejections to claims 12 and 294. Applicants have made the present

amendment in view of the apparent inadvertent allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner inform the Applicants if the allowance was not inadvertent. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 329 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 30, 31, 295 and 330

Applicants have amended claim 30 to incorporate the recitations of claim 29. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the claim 30 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 31 which depends from claim 30. The amendment to claim 31 is the amendment made on June 5, 2002 and subsequently withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 31 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 295 which is directed to a method to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 29. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 295 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 330 which is directed to a medium to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 29 and to include the withdrawn amendment made on June 5, 2002. Although claim 330 was indicated as allowed, it appears that this allowance may have been inadvertent in view of the rejections to claims 30 and 295. Applicants have made the present amendment in view of the apparent inadvertent allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner inform the Applicants if the allowance was not inadvertent. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 330 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 32-34, 296, 331 and 362

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claim 32 and its dependent claims 33, 34 and 362. Applicants also note with appreciation the allowance of claims 296 and 331.

Claims 35-37, 297 and 332

Applicants have amended claim 35 to incorporate the recitations of claim 37, which has been canceled. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the claim 35 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 36 which depends from claim 35. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 36 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 297 which is directed to a method to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 37. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 297 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 332 which is directed to a medium to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 37 and to include the withdrawn amendment made on June 5, 2002. Although claim 332 was indicated as allowed, it appears that this allowance may have been inadvertent in view of the rejections to claims 35 and 297. Applicants have made the present amendment in view of the apparent inadvertent allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner inform the Applicants if the allowance was not inadvertent. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 332 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 38, 298 and 333

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claims 38, 298 and 333.

Claim 39

The Examiner rejected claim 39, but this claim was withdrawn in response to the restriction requirement dated January 2, 2003 and has been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 60-78, 301 and 336

Applicants have amended claim 60 to incorporate the recitations of claim 67, which has been canceled. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the claim 60 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claims 62-64 and 68 which depend from claim 60. The amendment to claim 64 is the amendment made on June 5, 2002 and subsequently withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 61-66 and 68-78 – which all depend from claim 60 – are in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 301 which is directed to a method to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 67. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 301 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 336 which is directed to a medium to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 67. Although claim 336 was indicated as allowed, it appears that this allowance may have been inadvertent in view of the rejections to claims 60 and 301. Applicants have made the present amendment in view of the apparent inadvertent allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner inform the Applicants if the allowance was not inadvertent. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 336 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 79, 302 and 337

Applicants have amended claim 79 to incorporate the recitations of claim 67. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the claim 79 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 302 which is directed to a method to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 67. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 302 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 337 which is directed to a medium to include similar recitations as set forth in claim 67. Although claim 337 was indicated as allowed, it appears that this allowance may have been inadvertent in view of the rejections to claims 79 and 302. Applicants have made the present amendment in view of the apparent inadvertent allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner inform the Applicants if the allowance was not inadvertent. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 337 is in condition for allowance.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. According, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

If, for any reason, the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, Applicants request that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles telephone number (213) 892-5630 to discuss any steps necessary to place the application in condition for allowance.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing docket no. 393032016800.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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